



**TheChicago
Bar
Foundation**

Ensuring
access
to justice
for all

2008

STRATEGY

VISION

The Chicago Bar Foundation's vision is that the fundamental American principle of equal access to justice becomes a reality for all residents of the Chicago metropolitan area.



VALUES

- Equal access to justice is central to our democratic society, integral to the effective functioning of our justice system and a critical part of the safety net for vulnerable members of our community.
- As trustees of our system of justice, lawyers have a special responsibility to ensure equal access to justice. As the charitable arm of The Chicago Bar Association (CBA), The Chicago Bar Foundation (CBF) is firmly committed to this fundamental tenet of the legal profession and believes that the huge and persistent gap in access to our civil justice system is a call to action for the legal community.
- All of our stakeholders are equally important to fulfilling our mission: our donors; our grantees; the CBA; our board, staff and volunteers; our many other partners; and all of the Chicago-area residents who ultimately benefit from our collective efforts.
- The CBF is committed to striving for excellence and transparency in all of our work, managing our resources effectively, and adhering to the highest ethical standards in our governance and management.



OBJECTIVE


As the charitable arm of The Chicago Bar Association, the CBF rallies our legal community around a cause that is uniquely important to us as lawyers and legal professionals: ensuring that everyone in the Chicago area has access to justice, particularly the low-income and disadvantaged Chicagoans who most need the protections of our civil legal system.

The CBF plays a distinct and vital role in the community by taking a system-wide approach to tackling this issue. Through grants, advocacy and other programs, we:

- Advance the work of our community's pro bono and legal aid organizations;
- Enable dedicated lawyers to pursue careers in legal aid and help pro bono attorneys most effectively supplement their efforts; and
- Make the courts and legal system more user-friendly and accessible for all.

IMPLEMENTATION

Rallying the Legal Community Around This Cause

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- Build awareness of the importance of pro bono, legal aid and equal access to justice through law firm and corporate leadership circles, the CBF Investing in Justice Campaign, special events and related initiatives
 - Encourage lawyers and legal professionals to donate money to the cause
 - Promote pro bono work in law firms and corporations, and among the CBA membership
 - Educate lawyers about using their influence to advance the cause in the courts and in the policymaking process

Legal Aid Organizations

- Provide grants to support and strengthen legal aid organizations
- Advocate at the national, state and local government levels for adequate government funding and supportive policies
- Create partnerships in the broader philanthropic community to support legal aid and access to justice initiatives
- Promote best practices on management, governance and pro bono

Pro Bono and Legal Aid Attorneys

- Enable dedicated lawyers to pursue legal aid careers by awarding fellowships and scholarships and providing grants to help ensure adequate legal aid salaries
- Advocate with federal and state policymakers for loan repayment assistance, loan forgiveness and related programs to help legal aid lawyers
- Provide training and professional development opportunities for legal aid attorneys through free CBA memberships and CLE, and other programs
- Connect attorneys with pro bono opportunities in the community that fit their skills, interests and availability

Courts and Legal System

- Provide grants to support court-based advice desks and pro bono projects
- Educate the courts about the needs of unrepresented litigants to improve their access to and understanding of the system
- Identify and address emerging legal aid needs and gaps in the service delivery system
- Promote innovation and build strategic partnerships in the pro bono and legal aid delivery system



CBF Supported Organizations:*

Access Living - *Civil Rights Project*
 AIDS Legal Council of Chicago
 Cabrini Green Legal Aid Clinic (CGLA)
 CAIR – Chicago - *Civil Rights Project*
 CARPLS (Coordinated Advice & Referral Program for Legal Services)
 Center for Conflict Resolution (CCR)
 Center for Economic Progress - *Midwest Tax Clinic*
 Centro Romero - *Latin American Legal Assistance Services*
 Chicago Coalition for the Homeless - *Law Project*
 Chicago Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
 Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers (CLAIM)
 Chicago Legal Clinic (CLC)
 Chicago Volunteer Legal Services (CVLS)
 Community Economic Development Law Project (CEDLP)
 Domestic Violence Legal Clinic
 Equip for Equality
 Evanston Community Defender
 Families' and Children's AIDS Network (FCAN) – *Family Options Project*
 The Family Defense Center
 Farmworker Advocacy Project
 First Defense Legal Aid
 Health & Disability Advocates (HDA)
 Illinois Legal Aid Online
 Latinos Progresando – *Immigrant Legal Services*
 Lawyers' Committee for Better Housing (LCBH)
 Lawyers for the Creative Arts (LCA)
 Legal Aid Bureau of Metropolitan Family Services (LAB)
 Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago (LAF)
 Life Span - *Center for Legal Services & Advocacy*
 Midwest Center on Law & the Deaf (MCLD)
 National Immigrant Justice Center (NIJC)
 Public Interest Law Initiative
 The Roger Baldwin Foundation of the ACLU - *Children's Initiative*
 Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
 Uptown People's Law Center
 World Relief-Chicago - *Immigration Legal Services*

*This list represents organizations that receive organizational support grants from the CBF. The CBF also supports a number of other special projects and initiatives that advance the CBF's mission.

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